A. Statewide Information System Capacity

A.1. Discuss how effectively the State is able to meet the State plan requirement that it operates a Statewide information system that can determine the status, demographics, location, and goals for all children in foster care in the State. In responding, consider the accessibility of this information to State managers and local staff and the usefulness of the information in carrying out the agency's responsibilities.

Statewide Information System Description
In adherence with the Administration for Children and Families requirements, Missouri is creating a compliant State Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS). This system will be known as the Family And Children's Electronic System (FACES). Missouri's current legacy system provides all the data elements used to prepare federal and state reports. A gap analysis of the existing system documented that the existing application used by the Children's Division contains 76% and 80% of the SACWIS required and optional data elements, respectively. Therefore, Missouri is developing a federally compliant and user-friendly SACWIS that will leverage our investment in the existing mainframe with an HTML presentation that will maximize user utility.

For example, the legacy system did not provide the functionality required by the different child welfare program areas to accommodate a user-friendly and intuitive interface that can be rapidly developed and deployed for an automated search of all child welfare program areas. Based on recent SACWIS compliant development, Missouri launched a new routine that now produces a comprehensive report for a Departmental Client Number (DCN) utilizing a name search and display prior case history for any member who has received services from any of the programs offered. Users were previously were required to access 40 to 60 separate inquiry screens to gather this information on paper.

All the clients in the subsystems are linked together by a common DCN. This is an eight digit, unique number that will identify a certain person to which it has been assigned. The same DCN number is used for all Department of Social Services programs and will remain in the system, attached to the particular person to which it was assigned, until their death. FACES has already compressed many on-line legacy inquiry screens into a DCN Comprehensive History report that has resulted in an estimated statewide annual savings of $1.9 million. (16 minutes to search 60 inquiry screens reduced to 4 minutes using the report by number of field staff times the number of children in foster care).

FACES is incorporating the existing data elements and functionality that exists in the current system that in some instances exceed, federal, state, local requirements, and statutes by incorporating child welfare best practices into our state policies and practices. Over the next few years, FACES is being developed incrementally beginning with Intake Management, and moving through Eligibility, Case Management, Financial Management, Resource Management, and Administration with the required interfaces to other systems data.

FACES is being designed to incorporate all SACWIS required functional components, interfaces into other information systems outside the Children's Division and provide the appropriate alerts,

ticklers, and notifications. Further, FACES is incorporating structured decision making tools for risk and safety assessments in the automation for Intake Management based on the Children's Research Center's Child Protective Services model.

FACES is being designed to provide data integrity, reduce redundancy, improve work efficiency and provide cost savings throughout the Children's Division by automating its case management functions and reducing the dependency on paper files when feasible. FACES will provide an automated statewide single system that is user-friendly, and intuitive.

FACES is being designed to improve the quality of data collected and encourage timeliness and completeness of data entry. FACES is also being designed to incorporate on-line training activities, policy manuals, desk manuals, forms manuals and the ability to send written problems or questions through the automated system.

FACES is being designed to include the legacy system's ability to share data on children in foster care with various partners including courts and schools as part of the Missouri Juvenile Justice Information Sharing (MOJJIS) system. Utilization and participation in MOJJIS: 1) provides for children with multiple needs; 2) Allows for a comprehensive assessment of children and families; 3) Assists with coordination of service plans; 4) improves decisions about children and families; 5) avoids duplication; and 6) avoids conflicting demands.

The current legacy system is separated into several subsystems, which enables personnel, based on approved security clearances to access all or selected subsystems. The subsystems are: Departmental Database (Personnel training, worker's numbers and names, etc); Children's Services Integrated Payment System (CSIPS); Alternative Care Vendor Subsystem; Alternative Care Client Subsystem; Family-Centered Services Subsystem; Preventive Services Subsystem; Child Abuse and Neglect Subsystem.

There are 284 management reports spanning all subsystem produced from the legacy system. Manager's reports are automatically printed and distributed through pre-programming by data processing. Periodically a review of the management reports is completed and a determination is made whether the report continues to be useful. New reports can be added and old ones deleted, based on current need. A new technology tool allowing us to automate sending reports versus printing and sending paper copies is in process.

Each month, Research and Evaluation aggregates program data that has been entered into the subsystems and develops a monthly report. The monthly report, often referred to as the "pink book", is broken into four sections representative of our program areas: Child Abuse and Neglect, Family-Centered Services, Out-of-Home Care, and Intensive In-Home Services (formerly Family Preservation). The monthly report is sent to every area and county office, as well as, management personnel in Central Office. In addition, Research and Evaluation use the information from the subsystems to provide the requested elements to the National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) and Adoption Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS).

Information presented in the monthly report is the best available at the time of publication. Due to delays in processing data, the reports can be incomplete at month's end. Therefore, fiscal and calendar year end reports are produced. The calendar year end report focuses on child abuse and neglect incidents and provides detailed aggregated information such as child demographics, type of neglect, perpetrator demographics, etc. The fiscal year end report covers all program areas and provides more detailed information than monthly reports.

The IIS program data is included in both the monthly and calendar year end reports, but a separate program report is produced on a fiscal year basis. This report gives demographics of families and children served by this program, as well as, specific site information. The IIS fiscal year end report aggregates site data such as: reasons not accepted for program, referral source, head of household information, and follow-up information.

Aggregated information from all program areas are utilized when developing preventive programs, identifying trends, and providing technical assistance to field staff. A task force was organized to study various sources of data currently collected and distributed to determine if changes were needed for strategic planning purposes. Domains were constructed for safety, permanency and stability, well-being and quality assurance. Then, the task force developed outcomes measures which are currently available to all staff on the Division's "intranet".

Roundtable Discussion Results
Strengths Identified
- *Missouri's information system has the ability to retrieve information for long periods of time. Missouri has the ability to look at data longitudinally and at a point-in-time to determine practice trends.*
- *Missouri's information systems can provide "real time" information.*
- *Some program data is used to drive practice and influence allocation of workload. decisions.*
- *Outcome measures and "pink book" (monthly aggregated report) data are available through the intranet and internet. All Children's Division personnel have access to the outcome data and are encouraged to use the information.*
- *Missouri has many on-line inquiry screens accessible to staff.*
- *Missouri's system can accurately determine the status, demographics, location, goals, and other key information for all children involved in the foster care system statewide.*
- *A SACWIS compliant system is being developed to provide a flexible and responsive source of management information with increased accessibility, and utility of the data and improved quality of the data.*

Challenges Identified
- *A need for timely and consistent entry of information about the children and families served.*
- *A need to use data information to advocate for the agency. Missouri has a need to develop a structure for sharing information, such as providing consumers with information about the good things accomplished.*

- *A need to increase the use of child welfare outcomes measures for short and long term planning.*
- *A need for staff to manage information about their cases electronically.*

Recommendations for Improvements
1. *Continue involvement with the Missouri Juvenile Justice Information Sharing (MOJJIS) project.*
2. *Train staff to more thoroughly analyze data and to use it to drive practice.*
3. *Use data information to inform the general population and legislature.*
4. *Link certain systems together to prevent duplication of information.*
5. *Develop a case management tool for the information system.*
6. *Clarification of data definitions so they may be used in short and long term planning.*
7. *Research and narrow the use of the "other" categories used for the collection of some data elements.*
8. *Study other state SACWIS systems to assess best practices to help meet Missouri development of FACES.*